

# MERCY REGIONAL COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

**ISSUE 2-1**

**Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2018**

## **Our Vision**

Mercy Regional College serves a wide rural community which values growth and diversity in Catholic Education in the Mercy tradition.

## **Our Mission**

In the Spirit of the Gospels we commit ourselves to the core values of community, inclusiveness, learning, care, justice and mercy, excellence and achievement.

## **Our Focus for 2018**

"Through the Mercy tradition we welcome and celebrate individual difference".

---

## **FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

This week's newsletter begins with a reflection on this week's commemoration of ANZAC Day across our local communities and the nation. The overwhelming thought I had across the week was how the importance of the day and its recognition of those who have served in the defence of our country has changed in my lifetime. Growing up in Colac, my experience of ANZAC Day was a very different one. I don't remember attending the dawn services at the local Memorial Square or regularly viewing the ANZAC march; Australia's involvement in the World Wars was studied at school but strictly as historical facts, with the ongoing challenges facing current or returned service men and women mostly ignored.

Yet over the last 25 years, the importance of ANZAC Day for all Australians has grown. At Wednesday's dawn and mid-morning services in Camperdown, people of all ages and backgrounds were present: young, old, families and single people, school and community groups. Some there would have had direct connections to those who served 100 years before while others (like my family) had ancestors from other districts who served yet we were all present to remember their courage, determination and sacrifice as well as those at home who supported them. Finally, I also believe that the increasing importance of ANZAC Day is having marked impact on the appreciation and respect with which those who serve or have served in the Australian Armed Forces in recent years are accorded.

My reflection today is a couple of verses from a Lee Kernaghan song, *Spirit of the Anzacs*, that was performed by the Mercy Ensemble at our College's ANZAC commemorations yesterday:

*He's a drover drifting over Western Plains,  
He's a city lad, a clerk down Flinder's Lane,  
They're in the trenches at Lone Pine,  
And on the Flanders firing line,  
A willing band of ordinary men.*

*He's all of them, he's one of us,  
Born beneath the Southern Cross,  
Side by side, we say with pride,  
He is all of them, he is one of us.*

Mercy Regional College was very well represented at the various commemorations held across our local communities on Wednesday. The College had students and staff involved at the Camperdown, Terang, Mortlake, Cobden, Port Campbell and Noorat services with a number of senior students presenting speeches, reciting the Ode and/or laying wreaths. Thanks to all who supported these and especially to Mr. Lachie Lee for his coordination of our school involvement.





### **St Patrick's Day Fires**

This newsletter is the first formal communication I have had with the Mercy community since the week following the traumatic fires that affected so many. Can I offer my thanks to everyone for the enormous support that has been offered to those in our school community (as well as many others across the district); I believe that these most difficult of times always brings out the best in each of us.

The College continues to receive donations of vouchers, gift cards and money; we are hoping to distribute most of these vouchers in the next couple of weeks and a small committee will look at more direct financial support for some families via the funds we have received. I urge any families who are struggling with shortages of anything or with school fees to please contact myself or Mrs. Jude Murfitt at the College. Alternatively, if you know of a family who needs assistance please contact us and we will endeavour to support them.

### **Mercy Regional College Open Day**

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May sees the College open the doors of the O'Keeffe Campus to prospective MRC students with our annual Open Day. An invitation to the event is included below and all Year 5 & 6 students in our HCSN schools should receive their own copy next week. The afternoon & evening is being held from 3.30 – 6.30pm at the O'Keeffe Campus, McKinnons Bridge Road, Noorat. (See flyer on page 4).

The College undertook a significant overhaul of the evening in 2017 with the focus on providing students with the opportunity to explore each of the College learning areas or domain through short hands-on activities that will showcase the opportunities that a Mercy education offers. The Open Day will also offer afternoon tea for parents and family members with short information sessions led by myself beginning at 5.00pm and 6.30pm.

I warmly encourage any and all prospective students to join us.

### **School Closure Day**

Ahead of the College Open Day on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May, staff will have a morning of professional learning at the McAuley Campus before moving out to the O'Keeffe Campus to prepare domain exhibits. As a result, **there will be no classes for students on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May.**

### **Parent Teacher Student Interviews**

Thanks to all parents and families who joined us on Tuesday for the first round of Parent – Student Interviews this year. There was a great buzz across each of the Middle School classrooms throughout the day and numbers were steady throughout each of the sessions. The commitment of parents to these meetings is most welcome as the relationship between students, teachers and parents is a critical one and essential to ongoing learning improvement.

### **Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) Project**

Thanks to all parents who completed the ECSI surveys for us over recent weeks, apologies again for the short timeline. We hope to see results coming out of these surveys in the second half of this year.

### **Staff and Student Activities**

- Congratulations to the staff and students who completed a memorable immersion trip to Cambodia over the recent Easter break. Although the conditions in Cambodia remain confronting and challenging for those involved, the experiences are life-changing. A particular highlight for all was a visit to the headquarters of Caritas in Sian Reap and the opportunity to view the end results of our fundraising efforts for Caritas here in Australia.
- Well done to staff and students who travelled to Princetown last week for the postponed Year 8 camp. Weather conditions were kind and all had a fantastic time.
- Other activities in the first two weeks of term include clay target shooting in Colac, the HSSSD Athletics carnival and a Year excursion walking up Mt Noorat.

Yours in Mercy,



**DR. DARREN EGBERTS**  
PRINCIPAL



**MERCY**  
Regional College

# **OPEN DAY**

**O'Keeffe Junior Campus, McKinnons Bridge Road, Noorat.**

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2018**  
**3.30pm – 7.30pm**



**Prospective parents and students are invited to attend our Open Day from 3.30pm.**

**Interactive displays for Students**  
**Parent Registrations**  
**Campus Tours**  
**Afternoon Tea**

**Information Sessions to be held at 5.00pm & 6.30pm**  
**(Parent's need only attend one session)**

**College Prospectus and Enrolment Form distributed on the day.**

**Enrolment applications for 2019 closing date:**  
**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2018**

For further information, please contact Mrs. Sue Bohm at the College office  
Phone: (03) 5593 2011  
Email [office@mercy.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@mercy.vic.edu.au)

**Learning to Care, caring to Learn**



Over the next week all Mercy students will complete the resilient youth survey. The Resilience Survey is a powerful tool for initiating directed, purposeful conversations with young people themselves as well as with teachers and parents, leading to an informed and practical learning improvement agenda.

The Resilience Project delivers emotionally engaging programs to schools, sports clubs and businesses, providing practical, evidence-based, positive mental health strategies to build resilience and happiness. They have delivered programs to over 500 schools around the country and worked with many elite sporting teams including the Australian cricket, netball and soccer teams, NRL and AFL clubs. Through presentations, wellbeing journals, school curriculum, teacher diaries and the project resilience app, the program seeks to have all students become mentally healthy. Project resilience program will be delivered to students from year 7-11 during pastoral care.

All students from year 7-12 will be involved in a presentation lead by the resilience project team on August 22. Parents will be invited to attend a parent workshop night on August 21 at 7pm. This is a wonderful opportunity for our school community and we look forward to assisting students through the use of this program to developing strategies to build resilience.

### **Winter Uniform**

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April all students will be expected to be at school in full winter uniform.

Boys – School jumper, shirt, long grey pants and black socks, black leather shoes. Optional MRC jacket.  
Girls – School jumper, shirt, kilt, black tights, black leather shoes. Optional MRC jacket.

\*Please note that Kathmandu jackets and cameo jackets are not part of the school uniform and are not to be worn at school.

A reminder that shoulder length hair for girls and boys must be tied up. Jewellery is to be minimal with one pair of earrings only, no more than two rings and one bracelet.

## SENIOR SCHOOL MATTERS

*Mr. Lachie Lee*

### SENIOR SCHOOL MATTERS

As we are now about half way through semester 1, I would like to go over a few points and dates for the coming weeks.

Firstly, I'd like to thank everyone who attended the Parent Teacher Interviews on Tuesday. I know that we had a very good turnout of parents and students at the Senior School level and that many productive conversations were held. Please feel free to contact us and follow up any concerns that you may have. Also, if you missed the interviews and wish to catch up, feel free to get in touch.

### GENERAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST

The General Achievement Test (GAT) will be held on Wednesday 13 June. This is a three-hour test that is held each year for all VCE students who are studying a Unit 3/4 subject. This is a compulsory test and all students who are studying such a subject are required to attend regardless of whether they are sitting end of year exams.

I will include a statement here from the VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook 2018 regarding the importance of the GAT and the requirements for students

#### “Purpose of the GAT

The GAT is an essential part of the VCE assessment procedure. Although GAT results do not count directly towards VCE results, they do play an important role in checking that School-based Assessments and external assessments have been accurately assessed. GAT results are used in the calculation of the Derived Examination Score (DES).

The VCAA will use GAT scores in:

- The statistical moderation of school-based assessments
- Checking the accuracy of student scores in external assessments
- The calculation of a DES

#### Exemption from the GAT

It is important for all students with an enrolment in one or more VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences to attempt the GAT. “(VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook 2018 page 103. This handbook is available online at [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)).

I will be taking all eligible students at Years 11 and 12 through some practice GAT activities in the next few weeks.

### UNIT 1/2 EXAMS

As in previous years, the end of semester Unit 1/2 exams will be held in class time. These will be conducted over two and a half weeks from **Monday 4 June** until **Wednesday 20 June**. Students will be expected at school as per normal. We would ask that these dates are kept as free as possible when families are making other arrangements. There are several interruptions to this period including the Queen's Birthday Holiday, the GAT and an inter-school basketball competition.

## **ATTENDANCE**

I would ask that students' attendance at school and classes continue to be a priority. It is a requirement for the satisfactory attainment of individual assessment tasks as set out by the VCAA, that students' work can be authenticated. If a student is absent for a significant amount of time, then that authentication becomes problematic.

Below is an extract from the Mercy Regional College Senior School Guidelines regarding our attendance policy:

### **"VCE Attendance**

All VCE units involve at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. The school sets minimum class time and attendance rules. If a student has completed work but there has been a substantial breach of attendance rules, and the school therefore wishes to assign an N to the unit, the school must assign an N for one or more outcomes and thus the unit.

### **VCAL Attendance**

Within a school setting, a VCAL learning program would normally be based on a full-time load of scheduled and unscheduled learning (1000 hours). Attendance in a school setting is determined by school regulations. In other educational settings, the nominal hours may vary, taking into consideration the specific needs of the student.

### **(VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook)**

At Mercy Regional College the school policy for Senior School attendance is based on the guidelines set by the VCAA.

Students are expected to be in attendance at least 80% of scheduled classroom time.

- If a student is absent the students and /or their guardians need to notify the school. If the student is absent and the school has not been notified the school will contact the student's home seeking an explanation for the absence.
- Any serious or lengthy absence should be supported by documentary evidence such as a doctor's certificate.
- When a student's attendance falls below 80% of scheduled classroom time, Parent Notified Absence needs to be followed up with relevant documentation or a meeting with the Parent/Guardian needs to be arranged.
- While the school is sensitive to the particular circumstances of individual families, it is highly recommended that family holidays avoid exam periods and Start Up periods at the end of each semester. Exam and Start Up sessions will not be rescheduled for individual students. Exam and Start Up periods are published on the school calendar
- Parents, the school, subject teachers and students should engage in open communication when a student is in danger of failing to fulfil the attendance component of their course
- At all times, a common-sense approach should be adopted when addressing these matters."

**Again, please feel to contact Lesa Thornton, Matt Harkin or me if you have any queries regarding these issues or any other matters.**

Thank you,  
**Lachie Lee**

## **Mercy Regional College ‘Cambodia Immersion Trip’**

*Mrs. Jo-Anne Saunders*

Mercy Regional College again took their Social Justice service to a new level with the 2018 Cambodia Immersion Trip. Under the guidance of Destination Dreaming, 14 students and two staff journeyed to Cambodia for 12 days in late April/March.

Our immersion into Cambodian culture began with a cultural tour of number of temples including Angkor Wat and Ta Phrom and the Land mine museum.

The team stayed at the Jesuit Reflection Centre in Siem Reap and under the guidance of Sr. Denise Coghlan, an Australian Sister of Mercy who has been in Cambodia for some 35 years, the students learnt about the needs of the Cambodian people and their struggles through many years of political upheaval and conflict. Students learnt of the call for peace, forgiveness and support that transcends all religious beliefs and cultural divides in Cambodia.

Our students then ventured inland to Kampong Thom where they were welcomed into the AHHA school there. Each afternoon for four days they shared the skills of conversational English and some mathematics. Most importantly, relationships were formed and students made contacts as global citizens. Our students taught small children through to some parents and others in their middle twenties.

While in Kampong Thom students also were lucky enough to see the Caritas (Catholic International Aid Program) headquarters and hear about the programs that Caritas has underway in the region. Bio-gas, solar panels, dam building and organic farming were all discussed and fortunately the following day our students were able to go out to the villages and farms and see first-hand, the projects as well as the success and pride of the farmers and communities.

We then were lucky enough to have an opportunity to support some of the land mine amputees in a physical way by moving soil to help landscape ‘Sanctuary House’ which has been built to support displaced persons and so a busy day was spent digging, shovelling and carrying.

Spending Easter in Cambodia is a very unique and chocolate free experience! The group attended the Saturday Vigil Mass at St John’s Catholic Church in Siem Reap. The experience of hearing the Lord’s prayer spoken in a number of different languages by the congregation was very symbolic of the aim of the program which is to create global citizens and display Gospel values through an eagerness to learn, participate and provide assistance.

After Easter the team were busy visiting more schools and presenting reading books with both English and Khmer translations to Primary schools. Students paid for and assembled wheelchairs which are prepared in kit form, for landmine victims and gave their time and energy to constructing these with the help of Rhet. (Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1997).

The program showed our students that families across Cambodia have many issues to deal with including amputations from landmines and displacement of family members. They work so hard to learn English and to achieve success in their schooling, striving to lead Cambodia into a positive future. Our Mercy students supported one another as a team and learned what it meant to have their comfort zones widened by engagement with others in different language, culture and economic standing. The Cambodia trip is a bi annual event for the MRC community and plans are already underway to prepare for the next trip in 2020.

### **Attendees were:**

#### **Staff**

Jo-Anne Saunders and Kellie Wilson

### **Students:**

Nathan Wyss, Ned Payne, Toby Fleming, Ebony Poole, Stephanie Pride, Hayley Wason, Brianna Gass, Kayla Hallyburton, Sophie Rowan, Sophie Harlock, Amy Kavenagh, Sophie Swain, Hannah Whytcross and April Harris.







## Clay Shoot Competition

*Mr. Dean Ludeman*

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April approximately 130 competitors (13 students from Mercy) participated in the Annual School's Clay Shooting Competition held at the Colac Gun Club.

Congratulations to Dermot Carlin and Sam Darcy for finishing equal first in Senior Boys (we will be having a shoot off to find the winner) and to Hannah Whytcross for coming third in the Senior Girls.

We finished second in the Teams section and well done Isaac Howard on his first competition.



## Lions Youth of the Year Contest (YOTY) 2018

*By Jan Smith, Lions Club of Camperdown YOTY Coordinator & MRC Representative*

This year, MRC was well represented in the Lions Club YOTY Contest. Seven MRC students participated with students from other schools in the area. At Club level, Ed Lee and Polly Moloney participated at Terang, Tate Tregear Copeland and Josh Newcombe participated at Simpson and Ella Gleeson, Faith Thornton and Ripley Watt participated at Camperdown.

The contest involves the participants having an interview during the day, then on the night answering two Impromptu questions, and delivering a 5-minute prepared speech on a topic of their choice. There can be a Public Speaking winner and an Overall Winner, or the one participant can win both. Only the Overall Winner moves to the next level of the contest.



*Polly, Josh, Jan Smith & Ripley*

She spoke 6<sup>th</sup> in the Prepared Speech section, and had taken on board the advice given to the participants at Willaura by the judges, and spoke beautifully, having slowed her pace from previous times. Again, much excitement as the judges chose Ripley as the Overall Winner. It was now off to Barooga, on the Murray, for the State Final on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April.

The same format is followed as in other levels of the contest, and Ripley was first in answering the impromptu questions as well as for her prepared speech. Her impromptu questions were answered extremely well, but the judges felt her prepared speech didn't grab them straight away! (We, however, thought she was brilliant!).



This year's Region Youth of the Year event was held at the Willaura on 11<sup>th</sup> March. Ripley Watt, Polly Moloney and Josh Newcombe, being Overall winners from their Club level, all participated. Ella Gleeson had won the Public Speaking section at Camperdown Club level, so did not proceed to the Region Final. Everybody had worked hard on honing their prepared speech since Club level, and presented well. They also answered two impromptu questions on the day, answering very well thought out answers. The judges chose Ripley as the Overall Winner and moved to the next level of the contest.

Next step on the YOTY journey was on 25<sup>th</sup> March at Hotel 520, Hoppers Crossing for the District Final. Ripley was first up for the Impromptu questions, and answered them well, in her confident manner.



*Ripley Watt, up first at the State Final of YOTY.*

The Chairperson of the judging panel gave them general feedback and said they should all be very proud of being 1 of the 5 best in the State. The judges then privately gave each participant personal feedback, which is invaluable for them in their future.

Unfortunately, Ripley was not chosen to move forward to the National level, but should be very proud of her efforts and personal growth in the contest.

*Judi Oakes (Camperdown Lion member, Ripley Watt, Jan Smith at District Level Contest.*



## Career News

Mrs. Jenny Phillips

### ***Tertiary Information Service (TIS) Tour***

The Tertiary Information (TIS) Tour came to MRC on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March. It provided Year 12 students access to 22 tertiary providers based in Victoria. The session began with a presentation which gave students an overview of their post-school options and then outlined the process for applying for tertiary studies. Following the presentation, students had the opportunity to meet with the tertiary institution representations to collect course information and ask questions. This was an excellent opportunity for our students to gain valuable information from a wide range of institutions without having to leave the school grounds.



### ***Don't forget to check out the Weekly Careers News:***

Website: <https://careers.mercy.vic.edu.au/> Once inside the website, to access the Weekly Career News go to: Important Info. (top of the page) > Careers Newsletter > Career News.



# COMING DATES

## TERM 2

### **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May**

GWR Table Tennis. Middle and Senior Boys and Girls

### **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

MRC Finance Committee Meeting

### **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May**

College Open Day @ Noorat

### **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May**

MRC Cross Country

### **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May**

NAPLAN Tests – Years 7 & 9

MRC Board Meeting

### **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May**

NAPLAN Tests – Years 7 & 9

### **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May**

NAPLAN Tests – Years 7 & 9

### **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

HSSSD Cross Country

### **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

HSSSD Netball (Senior & Intermediate)

Year 11 Mock Interviews

### **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

Year 7 & 8 Geography & History Competitions

Year 9 & 10 History Competition

### **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May**

Whole School Mass

### **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May**

Unit 3 Legal Studies Excursion - Karreenga Prison

### **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May**

HSSSD Year 7 & 8 Netball

HSSSD Year 9 Football

### **Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May**

Science Competition

### **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June**

GWR Cross Country

### **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June**

Unit 1 & 3 Chemistry Excursion

### **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June**

Queen's Birthday Holiday – no school for staff & students

## **PUBLIC NOTICES**

### **WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND**

*Invest in your most precious asset.....Your Marriage!*

Forget life's tensions and interruptions and rekindle the closeness, intimacy, love and romance that brought you together. Recharge your relationship batteries and explore the precious nature of your marriage, allowing you both to share your feelings, hopes and dreams with each other in ways that normal, daily living tends to inhibit.

*There is no group sharing. Couples and a priest present the weekend. It is based around Catholic values but couples of all faiths are welcome.*

**2018 Melbourne weekend dates:**

***1-3 June, 17-19 August, and 9-11 November 2018***

*Starts 7pm on Friday. Ends 5pm Sunday.*

*Accommodation and all meals provided.*

Information/Bookings: PH: Andre and Maria 0411 225 992

Email: [vicbookings@wwme.org.au](mailto:vicbookings@wwme.org.au)

Website: [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au)

### **DARLINGTON COMMUNITY BUSH DANCE**

**8pm SATURDAY, 5 MAY 2018**

**\$20 Adult / \$10 Student / U10 FREE**

**Supper  
provided  
Drinks for sale**



**ALL PROCEEDS TOWARDS  
DARLINGTON HALL**

**Camperdown Theatre Company** presents in 2018



**Café  
MURDER**  
A DINNER COMEDY

A HILARIOUS MURDER MYSTERY BY NATHAN HARTSWICK

**Friday, May 25 | Saturday, May 26**  
**Friday, June 1 | Saturday, June 2**

**Camperdown Golf Bowls Club**  
6.45pm for 7.00pm start

**Tickets \$50 for show and 2 course meal**  
**Drinks at bar prices, supporting the venue**

Tickets at Laffs, 163 Manifold St, Camperdown  
Phone 5593 1469  
or online at [camperdowntheatrecompany.com.au](http://camperdowntheatrecompany.com.au)

Produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., Denver, Colorado